



HEARD ACROSS MONTANA

An electronic newsletter in support of public safety services in Montana
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IM Weekly Highlights

- Outreach meetings took place with representatives from Carter, Custer, Dawson, Garfield, Fallon, McCone, Powder River and Treasure Counties along with the City of Glendive and Miles City officials. IM representatives also met with members of the Northern Cheyenne Tribal Council and other tribal public safety officials on Wed. of this week. No outreach meetings are scheduled for next week due to the holiday and IM meetings.
- Motorola has completed testing of trunking sites in the central portion of the Northern Tier.

Big Sky 11 Consortium Discusses New Direction

By Scott Bradford sbradford@mt.gov

The Big Sky 11 Consortium met Aug. 26 and the theme of new directions and focus dominated discussion.

With the recent needs assessment completed by the City of Billings and concerns that priorities are being given to areas not supporting the IM process, Director Floyd Fisher led the group in a discussion of priorities and future direction. The consortium will be evaluating sites in Billings and southward toward Big Horn County and the Crow and Northern Cheyenne Nations to confirm locations and design. Lack of coverage along Highway 212 and on tribal lands is a concern. This reevaluation will prepare the consortium to work on funding sources both through the IM and independently.

Once sites in Billings are confirmed, the Public Safety Services Bureau committed (through the IM Frequency Sub-Committee) to initiate frequency searches for these and remaining sites within the consortium. Frequencies are already in place for the Dunn Mountain, Pompey's Pillar, Radio Hill, Shane Ridge and North Forsyth sites. Challenges with site access, such as the Wolf Mountain and Decker Relay sites, were noted and discussed.

Ian Marquand, IM Public Affairs and Outreach Consultant, summarized the recent outreach meetings held in Billings, Roundup and Hardin.

The next Big Sky 11 consortium meeting is scheduled for Thurs., Sept. 24 at the Yellowstone County EOC, 2305 8th Ave. N. The technical committee will meet at 8:30 am and the entire consortium will meet at 10:00 am.

Public Safety Services Bureau
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A Montana National Guard helicopter hoisted a shelter, microwave dishes and other radio equipment to the Highwood Baldy site north-east of Great Falls last week.



The helicopter in these photos is carrying a microwave dish protected in a wooden crate.



IM Project Director Chair Names Audit Committee

By E. Wing Spooner espooner@mt.gov

Butte-Silver Bow Sheriff John Walsh, IM Finance Committee Chair, has submitted names to Chief Alan Michaels, IM Project Directors Chair, for the appointment of members to the IM Audit Standing Committee and the naming of a committee chair.

IM Bylaws require at least two Project Directors to serve on the committee; hence, Gallatin County Sheriff Jim Cashell, representing the Mobile Data Terminal Consortium, and Golden Valley Sheriff Floyd Fisher, the Big Sky 11 Consortium Project Director, have been appointed.

Representative William Glaser, HD 44, also has been named to the committee as well as Commissioner Cindy Johnson, Pondera County. In addition, Sheriff Tony Harbaugh, Custer County, has agreed to serve on the Audit Committee. In addition, a technical advisor from Anderson ZurMuehlen will assist the standing committee to fulfill audit requirements.

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Policies and goals are in the process of being established. It is expected that the committee will meet 4-6 times a year. One of the first functions will be to develop and issue a Request for Proposal (RFP) to hire a consultant to perform the financial audit.

According to Bill Fleiner, IM Finance Officer, the audit will be a significant testament to the effective operations of the IM.

Northern Tier Tackles Tough Issues While Nearing Acceptance

By Scott Bradford sbradford@mt.gov

The Northern Tier Interoperability Consortium (NTIC) met this week to review progress and continue toward accepting the new radio system. The meeting was dominated by several issues that may impact the timing and process of how the system is accepted.

Harris-Stratex has completed installation of the RJ-45 equipment and other troubleshooting activities. Kevin Bruski reported that crews will be soon completing module replacement effort, discovered by the quality assurance group, to prevent future issues. In relation to this work, Scott Bradford reviewed the change order summary document developed by the Contract Sub-Committee that will close the Harris-Stratex portion of the contract. This document was signed by Project Director Wayne Dusterhoff.

Attention then turned to the Motorola schedule. The central part of the Northern Tier system surrounding the Mt. Royal, Havre and Antoine Butte sites, is currently in a testing phase and is scheduled to be turned on by the middle of Sept. Due to additional frequency and design problems encountered during this spring and summer, the timeline for completing the entire Northern Tier has been moved out to December. Lincoln and Flathead Counties have significant concerns because high mountain sites and typical heavy snows create site access and cost issues. Members discussed methods for dealing with this impediment. Motorola is committed to expediting the timeline where ever possible.

In other news, several more agencies submitted fleet mapping documents to Motorola to prepare for code-plugin development. In addition, Roosevelt County requested that the consortium consider a request to modify the Culbertson tower due to

space limitations for local agencies. Frequency interference issues also are being investigated in Sheridan, Roosevelt and Daniels County.

The next Northern Tier meeting is set for Thurs., Oct. 1 from 9:00 am to noon at the Great Northern Inn, 1345 1st St. in Havre.

Upcoming Meetings

IM Outreach Meetings

http://interop.mt.gov/im_outreach_meetings.mcp

No outreach meetings are scheduled the week of Sept. 7

Sept. 14 – Lewistown • 5:30 pm

Lewistown City Fire Dept. Training Room
305 Watson

Sept. 15 – Great Falls • 3:00 pm

Cascade County Courthouse Annex, Room 111
325 2nd Ave., North

Great Falls • 5:30 pm

Civic Center, Gibson Room, 2nd Floor
2 Park Drive South

Sept. 8 (Tues.)

IM Finance Committee

Helena • 9:00 am - Noon

Anderson ZurMuehlen, 828 Great Northern Blvd.

Sept. 8 (Tues.)

IM Governance Committee

Helena • 1:00 - 5:00 pm

Anderson ZurMuehlen, 828 Great Northern Blvd.

Sept. 9 (Wed.)

IM Project Directors (IMPD) Meeting

Helena • 9:00 am - 3:00 pm

MACo Large Conference Rm., Lower Level, 2715 Skyway Drive

Sept. 10 (Thurs. – Please note change of date/day)

South Central Montana Consortium (SCMICC)

White Sulphur Springs • 10:00 am

Sheriff's Office Training Center, 123 West Crawford

Sept. 17 (Thurs.) – Please note change of date/day)

Central Montana Consortium (CMICC)

Great Falls • 10:00 am • Location to be Announced

Sept. 17

I-15/90 Consortium

Butte • 10:00 am

Butte-Silver Bow Chamber, 1000 George St.

